Wheat.—On the street market 200 bushels of goose wheat sold at 62½c.; outside markets lack go and snap; business has a waiting spell. Ontario wheat is quoted at 73c. for red and 74c. for white.

Barley.—Six hundred bushels of barley sold at 26c. to 30½c.

Oats.—Five hundred bushels of oats at 21c. to 22½c.

Peas.—Two hundred bushels of peas at 41½c.

Hay.—About a dozen loads of hay sold at $12 to $13.50.

Straw.—Six loads of bundled straw at $6 to $7.50.

Baled Hay.—Choice hay sells at $10 on track here; No. 2 quoted from $7.50 to $8; dealers quote two ton lots of No. 1 delivered at $11.

Eggs.—There was a better supply to-day and prices eased off a little. New laid sold at 11c. to 11½c.; top price, 12c. per dozen; limed at 7c. to 8c. per dozen.

Butter.—There is no change in the market. Prices keep steady, and demand about equal to the supply; low and medium, 8c. to 9c. per lb.; small dairy rolls, strictly choice, 14c. to 15c. per lb. Medium dairy butter is slow, and there are some accumulations here, but choice dairies and creameries move out well; best creamery pounds, 21c. to 22c.

Cheese.—Steady; summer makes sell at 10c. to 10½c. per lb., and fall makes at 11½c to 12c. per lb.

Hides.—There is an increased enquiry from U. S. sources; owing to the proposed tariff, several lots have been shipped out lately. Pulled wool as well as fleece stocks are very light; wool combings, 21c. to 22c.; tub-washed fleece, 20½c.; pulled supers, 20c. to 21c.; extras, 22c. Cured hides are scarce, and it is reported that rather better prices have been paid this week; No. 1 green, 7c.; steer hides, 7½c.; No. 2, 6c.; No. 1 cured, 8c.

Skins.—Calfskins, No. 1 green, 6c. to 7c.; No. 2, 5c.; No. 1 cured, each 70c. to 85c. Sheepskins, $1 to $1.25 each.

Chatty Stock Letter from Chicago.

(BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

Following are the current and comparative prices for the various grades of live stock:—

CATTLE.	Range of Prices.	Present Two weeks ago.	Top prices 1896.	1895.
1500 lbs. up	$4 35 to 5 65	$5 60	$4 40	$6 60
1350 @ 1500	3 95 to 5 30	5 30	4 35	6 40
1200 @ 1350	3 75 to 5 15	5 20	4 20	6 25
1050 @ 1200	3 60 to 4 80	4 85	4 00	6 10
900 @ 1050	3 50 to 4 60	4 65	3 75	5 85
Stillers	3 70 to 4 80	4 40	....	....
Stks. and F.	3 20 to 4 30	4 20	3 75	4 90
Fat cows and heifers	3 30 to 4 75	4 25	3 85	5 25
Canning cows	1 75 to 2 50	2 50	2 30	2 75
Bulls	2 20 to 4 00	4 00	3 50	5 10
Calves	2 50 to 6 10	6 40	5 75	5 50
Texas steers	3 40 to 4 30	4 25	4 00	5 50
Texas C. & H.	2 75 to 3 95	3 40	3 00	3 60
HOGS.				
Mixed	3 95 to 4 20	3 90	4 07	4 70
Heavy	3 75 to 4 20	3 85	4 05	5 25
Light	3 90 to 4 15	3 90	4 15	4 95
Pigs	3 50 to 4 10	3 90	4 10	4 75
SHEEP.				
Natives	3 00 to 4 60	4 25	4 00	5 00
Western	3 50 to 4 50	4 25	3 85	4 87
Lambs	4 00 to 5 50	5 25	4 85	6 10

All kinds of live stock lately sold the highest of the year. Cattle are now 50c. to 75c. higher than average prices a year ago, hogs 10c. to 20c. higher, and sheep and lambs 50c. to 60c. higher than a year ago. Last week's receipts of cattle were the second smallest thus far this year, while the total number of sheep was the second largest.

Live stock people are in good spirits. The demand for breeding stock is better than for some time past. Breeders are feeling much encouraged.

Heavy purchases of Canadian wool are being made prior to the adoption of the new tariff law, which put on a duty of 12c. per lb.

In the Dingley Bill hides are on the free list for the benefit of Eastern shoe manufacturers and to the detriment of the Western cattle growers, and the latter are asking Congress to keep them out, but the chances are against them.

Following are some sample sales of corn-fed Western range cattle:

The Lance Creek Cattle Co. sold 99 head of 1,332-lb. fed Western steers at $4.70, and a load of 1,485 lb. bulls at $3 35. The Standard Cattle Co. sold 38 head of 1,399-lb. fed Western steers at $4.70, and 58 heifers averaging 1,263 lbs. at $4.25.

Feeding cattle are in very strong demand and are selling at high prices. Farmers are feeding all kinds of young stock and cows and heifers. They have plenty of feed and very few cattle to feed it to.

During the seven months ending January, 1897, 210.926 cattle were exported from the United States, against 189,005 the same period a year ago. Valuation of the 210,926 head, $19,740,542, against $17,726,042 a year ago.

Chicago exporters forwarded 3,9 4 cattle from Chicago last week, against 4,310 the previous week and 6,888 a year ago.

Latest English cablegram quotes best States steers 12c. per lb., against 9¾c. a year ago.

Distillery fed steers sold at $4.65 to $4.90, the highest of the year.

Doud & K. bought cattle at $4.70 to $4.80; Schwartzschild, $4.90 to $5.20; Hathaway, $4.50 to $5; Lehman $4.55 to $4.80. All for export.

Jos. Gould, the exporter, recently bought 800 cattle at Alvarado and Houston, Texas, at $3 85 for steers and $2.60 for bulls, to be exported direct from Galveston and New Orleans.

Mr. A. J. Thompson, the Canadian cattle exporter, says: "If the Texas cattle feeder could be made to realize the importance of dehorning, he would never put any other kind of cattle in the feed lot. They fatten easier and are worth $2 a head more to any buyer."

A Chicago hog buyer bought a drove of 500 hogs, averaging 225 lbs., which cost $4.16. He says hogs are at least 30c. per 100 lbs. too high, compared with the way the product is selling, and they will have to go lower.

Actual receipts of hogs for the third week in March, 122,933, the smallest since last November. The average weight was only 228 lbs., the lightest in over sixteen months, or since October, 1895. This month's average will be about 230, against 247 lbs. in January, 257 lbs. last September, and 246 lbs. last March

Hog raisers are enjoying a good harvest; that is, those who are fortunate enough to have any hogs on hand.

Nearly 700 fed Montana sheep, averaging 110 lbs., sold in one lot at $4.50; and 660 shorn Montanas, 110 lbs., sold at $4.

Most of the sheep dealers predict higher prices for both sheep and lambs. One man says the boom is on, and predicts that the best shorn sheep will reach $5 before the end of next June.

The Iowa Experiment Station at Ames sent in another consignment of fat lambs; they were not of extra quality as to breeding. There were in the shipment 63 Downs, 79 lbs., at $5.25; 57 Mexican, 78 lbs., $5 15; 63 Merino, 78 lbs, $5; 63 shorn Mexican, 69 lbs., $4.75. J. W. Wilson, son of the Secretary of Agriculture, and J. T. Hoover came in with them. Mr. Wilson is assistant director of the Station, vice C. F. Curtiss, promoted, and Mr. Hoover is his assistant.

Advices from Texas say that mutton buyers are scouring the San Angelo County for everything in that line that is fat enough to go to market. Recent sales reported in that section by the *Standard* give the range in price all the way from $2 to $2.50 per head.

A man from the noted lamb-feeding point, Fort Collins, says that while there have been more lambs shipped out than at this time last year, on account of the favorable weather and the earlier start, there are no more to come from now on than there were a year ago. There were about 175 000 Mexican lambs fed in northern Colorado this year, and he says they never had so fine a winter for feeding as the one now closed in Colorado.

THE HOUSE ON THE MARSH.

A Romance.

BY FLORENCE WARDEN.

(Continued from page 135.)

Again my brain seemed to whirl round, as it had done on the previous night when Sarah had been on the point of revealing James Woodfall's other name. My candle slipped from my fingers, fell with a hiss and a splash into the water below, and I was in darkness.

CHAPTER XXIV.

I gave one cry as my candle fell, and then, instinctively shutting my eyes, as if to hide from myself the dreadful fact that I was in darkness, I felt my way up the ladder out of that dreadful cellar into the store-room above. Then I groped about until I came at last to the door. I had left it unlocked; and the moment after I touched the handle I was on the other side. Luckily I had slipped the keys into my pocket at first sight of the black bag; and, after long but impatient fumbling, I managed to fit in the right one and to turn the lock securely. Then I groped my way along the passage, and found myself once more in the lighted hall.

I flung myself into a chair, overwrought and exhausted by what I had suffered in the left wing, and it was not for some minutes that I noticed an envelope directed simply, in Mrs. Manners' handwriting, to "Miss Christie, The Alders," which lay on the table beside me. I tore it open, and, scarcely glancing at her kind little note saying she had received the inclosed when she called at the Beaconsburgh post-office that afternoon, pressed Laurence's letter to my lips again and again before I opened it. It said:

"NICE, Friday.

"MY OWN SWEET VIOLET,—I had hoped to find a letter from you waiting for me on my arrival here; but I know very well it is not your fault that I am disappointed, even if I do not hear from you for a whole week—for I will never doubt my darling again.

"I am in a fever of anxiety about you. I will not distress you by a lot of vague suspicions that are rising in my mind to torture me; but I beg of you, my beautiful gentle love, to let me know every little event that happens at the Alders. I pray Heaven you may have very little to tell. And now I entreat you to comply with this my earnest, solemn request. Don't trust your letters to any one to post—don't even post them yourself—but give them to my youngest sister, to send on to me. She teaches in the Sunday-school. Get Mrs. Manners to send you up to the Hall on some pretext on Sunday; get Maud alone, and you will find she will do what you ask. Tell her to remember her last promise to me in the conservatory, and I'll remember mine.

"Keep this letter where no one can get at it—not in a desk—if you don't tear it up. I feel already such a hunger for a sight of your sweet face—I can't think of the touch of your little clinging hands about my throat without the tears rising in my eyes. I think I must jump into the sea if I cannot find some means of getting back to you sooner. Good-bye; Heaven bless you! Write to me; don't forget. Keep safe and well, till you are once again in the arms of

"Yours devotedly forever and ever,

"LAURENCE."

I went into the dining-room, took it out again, and had got to the middle of the second page, when the iron bar which fastened the shutters suddenly fell down, and a man was in the room before I could get to the door. With a cry of relief I sprung toward him.

"Oh, Mr. Rayner, how you frightened me! I thought you were a burglar."

"My poor, dear little girl, I often come in this way to save kicking my heels at the door; but I wouldn't have done it if I had known you were in here. I thought everybody would be occupied with the two invalids. And how are you, little woman?"

I was so delighted to see him back once more, to feel that at last there was some one to look up to and trust in the house again, that I laughed and cried together as he shook my hands and patted my shoulder, and told me that it would never do to leave me at the Alders in his absence again; he should have to take me with him. I laughed.

"Why, I am too useful here, Mr. Rayner! You see, as Mrs. Rayner is never well enough to give any directions, I was obliged to take a good deal upon myself; and I hope you won't be angry when you hear all I've done."

"No, my child, I am sure I shall not," said he, helping himself to some cold beef on the sideboard—there was no regular supper at the Alders, but there were always meat and biscuits on the sideboard after tea for those who cared for them. "How is Mrs. Rayner?"

I told him that she was no better and no worse, and that she had moved to-day into the front spare-room.

"To-day?"

"Yes. She was so reluctant to leave her own room that I took the liberty of telling Sarah I would answer to you for delaying the change this one day. Was it too forward of me?" I asked timidly.

"All that you have done is perfectly right, and always will be, in my eyes; so you need never fear what I may say to you, child. Have you any more news? I want to hear all about Sarah's accident, and whether you were very much alarmed when you heard about the robbery at Denham Court."

"I have a lot to tell you," I said hesitatingly: "but I won't tell you any of it to-night, Mr. Rayner, because it is all bad, miserable news, and I won't spoil your first evening. It is bad enough to come back to a house as full of invalids as a hospital. But it will come right again now you are back."

"Thanks, my child; that is the very prettiest welcome home I have had for—years," said he, with much feeling in his voice.

The next morning I went into the schoolroom after breakfast, thinking I would employ the hour and a half there was to spare before church time in just beginning my letter to Laurence. But I had not got beyond "My own dearest Lau—" when Mr. Rayner came in.

"Am I disturbing you?" said he.

"Oh, no! I was only writing a note to pass away the time."

"Well, and now for all the 'bad, miserable news' which was too overwhelming for me to hear about last night."

"Oh, Mr. Rayner, I don't know where to begin, and it seems ungenerous to tell it to you now, as the person it concerns most is ill and unable to answer for herself!"

And it required several questions and guesses on his part to draw out from me the account of the accident to Sarah, and the inevitable suspicions as to how it came about. Mr. Rayner turned quite pale when I came to my slipping on the stairs and catching my foot in the string, and he looked up and out of the window from under his frowning brows with an expression of hard fury that made me instinctively move away from him on my chair, it was so terrible, so merciless. It was with averted head that I whispered all the suspicious things I had seen and heard connecting Sarah and Tom Parkes with the Denham Court burglary—my view of Tom carrying something across the lawn; his returning with Sarah; the fact of two men in a cart having been seen outside—I did not say by whom, but I fancy Mr. Rayner guessed; my seeing the brown portmanteau inside the back door; and lastly my discovery of the portmanteau in the cellar under the store-room, and my recognition of it and of the bracelet I took out of it at haphazard as having both come from Denham Court.

Mr. Rayner listened with the deepest interest, but with some incredulity.

"Don't say a word about this to any one, child," said he at last. "I must sift the matter to the very bottom. It is possible that they may both have been cheated by some clever knave into assisting him innocently."

He remained silent again for a little while, then shook his head, as if to dismiss all disagreeable thoughts, and said, in his usual bright tone, "And now I have a little bit of news for you, which I hope you will think neither bad nor miserable. How would you like to leave the Alders for a short time, and spend a couple of weeks on the borders of the Mediterranean? I have to see one of Mrs Rayner's trustees on important business at once. He is staying at Monaco, which is, as you know, not far from Nice. Having to go there myself, I thought the change might do my wife good; and this morning I tried every inducement to persuade her to go, but in vain, as I expected. But for Haidee some change is absolutely necessary, as the doctor told you. And, as I cannot look after the child entirely by myself, I pondered as to who could do it for me, and I decided upon you. Now listen, and hear how cleverly I have managed it. Haidee goes to look after her papa, Miss Christie goes to look after Haidee, Mrs. Christie goes to look after Miss Christie."

"My mother!" I exclaimed.

"Yes. I went to see her yesterday, and proposed the plan to her. We have already settled that she is to meet us at Liverpool street on our arrival in town next Friday morning."

"Next Friday!" said I, utterly bewildered. "And leave Mrs. Rayner all alone here?"

"Unless you can persuade her to go with us. There, child," said Mr. Rayner, taking a letter from his pocket and putting it into my hands. "You don't seem able to take it all in. Read that."

It was a letter in my mother's handwriting. I opened it, still utterly bewildered. It said—

"MY DARLING VIOLET,—Your kind friend Mr. Rayner is waiting; so I can pen you only these few lines; and I don't know how to express my feelings at his generous offer. He says I am to write to you and persuade you to go; but I do not think you will need much persuasion. He has directed me to provide an outfit for you at his expense, and bring it with me to Liverpool Street Station, where I am to meet you on Friday, though I don't like starting on a journey on a Friday. Heaven be praised for sending us such kind friends! I have no time for more, as Mr. Rayner is waiting. With best love from your uncle and cousins, in the fond hope of seeing you very soon, Your affectionate mother, AMY CHRISTIE."

My dear mother! It was just like her to see nothing so very extraordinary in this offer, to take it as a matter of course, and thank Heaven for it in the most simple-minded way, while it troubled me somewhat still. I read the letter twice through, and then tried deprecatingly to thank him for the outfit he had got her to provide.

"Oh, does she mention that? I told her not to do so," said he, laughing.

"You don't know my mother. When she has anything to tell, she can't resist telling it. This letter is just like her. But she has done two things she never in all her life did before—dated her letter and put no postscript."

CHAPTER XXV.

As soon as we came out of church that morning, I found an opportunity of speaking to Mrs. Manners, and asked her shyly if she could give me any message to take that afternoon to Miss Maud Reade at the Hall.

"Laurence told me to ask you," I whispered timidly: "it is because he particularly wants my next letter to be inclosed in hers. He didn't say why, but he is very emphatic about it."

"Dear, dear," said kind Mrs. Manners, anxiously. "I don't know whether Mr. Manners would approve. But there—I promised Laurence I would help you—and there is no harm in it—and so I will. Come up to the Vicarage after afternoon service, and I'll give you a package of tracts for her."

After dinner Mr. Rayner tried again to induce his wife to go to Monaco, and encouraged me to join my persuasions to his, which I did most heartily. But to all we said she only replied that she thought the change would do me and Haidee good, and that it was very kind of my mother to go.

After dinner I ran up-stairs to my room, and, opening the door softly, sat down to write my scarcely-begun letter to Laurence.

I first told him how happy his letter had made me, and then, obeying his injunction to tell him everything that happened at the Alders, I gave him a full account of the way Sarah had prevented our meeting on Wednesday evening, and of her stealing my letter out of the bag on Thursday, of Mr. Carruthers' visit to tell me of the robbery at Denham Court, of the accident to Sarah on Friday night, of her ravings about a bad man named James Woodfall, of Mr. Rayner's return, and of his intention to take Haidee, my mother, and me to Monaco in a few days.

The hope of seeing Laurence again soon had by this time swallowed up every other thought concerning the journey and I was eager for Friday to come, that we might start.

Then I told him that I had some very grave suspicions about the robbery, that I had told them to Mr. Rayner, who did not think so seriously of them as I did, but that he said I ought not to repeat them to anybody until he had thoroughly sifted the matter, and I had promised not to do so.

I had said at dinner that day, in answer to Mr. Rayner's inquiries, that I was not going to afternoon service, but I had not mentioned that I was going to the Vicarage. I felt sure that I should blush if I did, and then Mr. Rayner would guess my visit had something to do with Laurence; and I did not want to be teased any more. So when five o'clock came, and I knew that service must be over, I slipped softly down-stairs and out by the schoolroom window.

Mrs. Manners met me in the hall of the Vicarage and gave me a packet of tracts to deliver to Miss Maud Reade for distribution in her district this week.

The mist was growing very thick, although it was only a little past five; and I knew I must make haste back, or I might risk losing my way, short as the distance was between the Hall and the Alders.

I rang the bell, and asked for Miss Maud Reade; and the servant showed me into the drawing-room. There was no one there, for they were all at tea.

Miss Maud Reade came in and shook hands with me rather timidly, but not unkindly.

"Mrs. Manners asked me to bring you these tracts for your district, Miss Reade."

"Thank you; it is very kind of you to take so much trouble," said she.

"Oh, it is no trouble at all," I answered.

There was a pause of rather awkward constraint; and then I said in a whisper:

"Laurence—your brother—told me to come and see you, and to ask you to put a—a letter from me to him inside yours. He said I was to tell you to remember your promise, and he would remember his; he underlined that."

Miss Reade's constraint broke up at once, and she grew as much excited and as mysterious as I.

"Did he? Then he hasn't forgotten!" she said in a hissing whisper. "I suppose you know what it is; it's about getting Mr. Reynolds to come here next winter. Oh do keep him up to it!"

"I will. I have brought my letter," said I mysteriously. "Shall you be writing soon?"

"I have a letter ready now, and I will put yours inside and give it to a gentleman who is here, and who is going back to London directly after tea, and I will ask him to post it at once."